

AFTERMATH OF THE V/AK

called the Democratic party. This Democratic party had no thins in common with its namesake in Azerbaijan and was composed exclusively of pro-Qavam and non-Communist elements. The new party was destined to play a major role in the forthcoming elections to the Fifteenth Majlis. The elections were to begin on December 7, but Qavam made it clear that they would not be held unless the government were in a position to supervise them all over the country including Azerbaijan. This certainly was a courageous policy on the part of the Iranian Premier, because it meant the reduction of the Iranian army into Azerbaijan and the challenging of the *status quo* in the province. Three factors played a decisive role in thus emboldening Qavam. The first was, paradoxically enough, a certain Soviet weakness. The Russians, who had exoriated the oil agreement while their army was in Iran, now needed badly its ratification, and this could not be done without a duly elected parliament. The Soviet was thus vitally interested in the speedy election of the new Majlis. The existence of an independent Azerbaijan regime was an obstacle to this road, and thus Russia was put between two mutually exclusive alternatives: either having the Majlis and the ratification of the agreement or a Communist-dominated Azerbaijan with an indefinite postponement of the ratification. To combine both alternatives, it would be necessary to invade Iran again, or at least to threaten an invasion, and such an act would put the Soviet Union technically in the position of an aggressor and might produce a violent reaction in the West. Conscious of this Soviet dilemma, Qavam was ready to exploit it to the utmost of his resources.

The second factor in encouraging the Premier was undoubtedly the British strength manifested by the tribal rebellion.

The third was a more positive American diplomacy. In April, 1946, George V. Allen, Deputy Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs in the Department of State, was appointed Ambassador to Iran. Youthful, yet possessing long diplomatic experience, the new Ambassador arrived in the capital of Iran at a time when Secretary Byrnes was giving proofs of increasing responsibility and initiative before the United Nations. Allen's role in the crucial months that followed was of prime importance. Having quickly established excellent relations with Iranian statesmen, the new envoy

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